Tigers rising after defeating Kentucky

SPORTS, 1C

GET HeartSMART
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24
8-11am | Cost $20 | Space is limited
Register at Jackson.org/events
or call 334-293-8805
JACKSON HOSPITAL

Montgomery Advertiser

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2018 ▫ MONTGOMERYADVERTISER.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Attorney in lawsuit now BOE counsel

Fred Bell involved in school board lawsuit

Andrew J. Yawn Montgomery Advertiser
USA TODAY NETWORK

The attorney the Montgomery school board selected on Tuesday to serve as its counsel is also involved in at least one ongoing lawsuit against local school board members.

The Montgomery County Board of Education (MCBOE) approved Fred Bell to take on legal counsel duties for the board with a 4-3 vote Tuesday. Melissa Snowden was particularly critical of both the suggestion and approval of Bell as the board's counsel, citing a legal notice she received Monday.

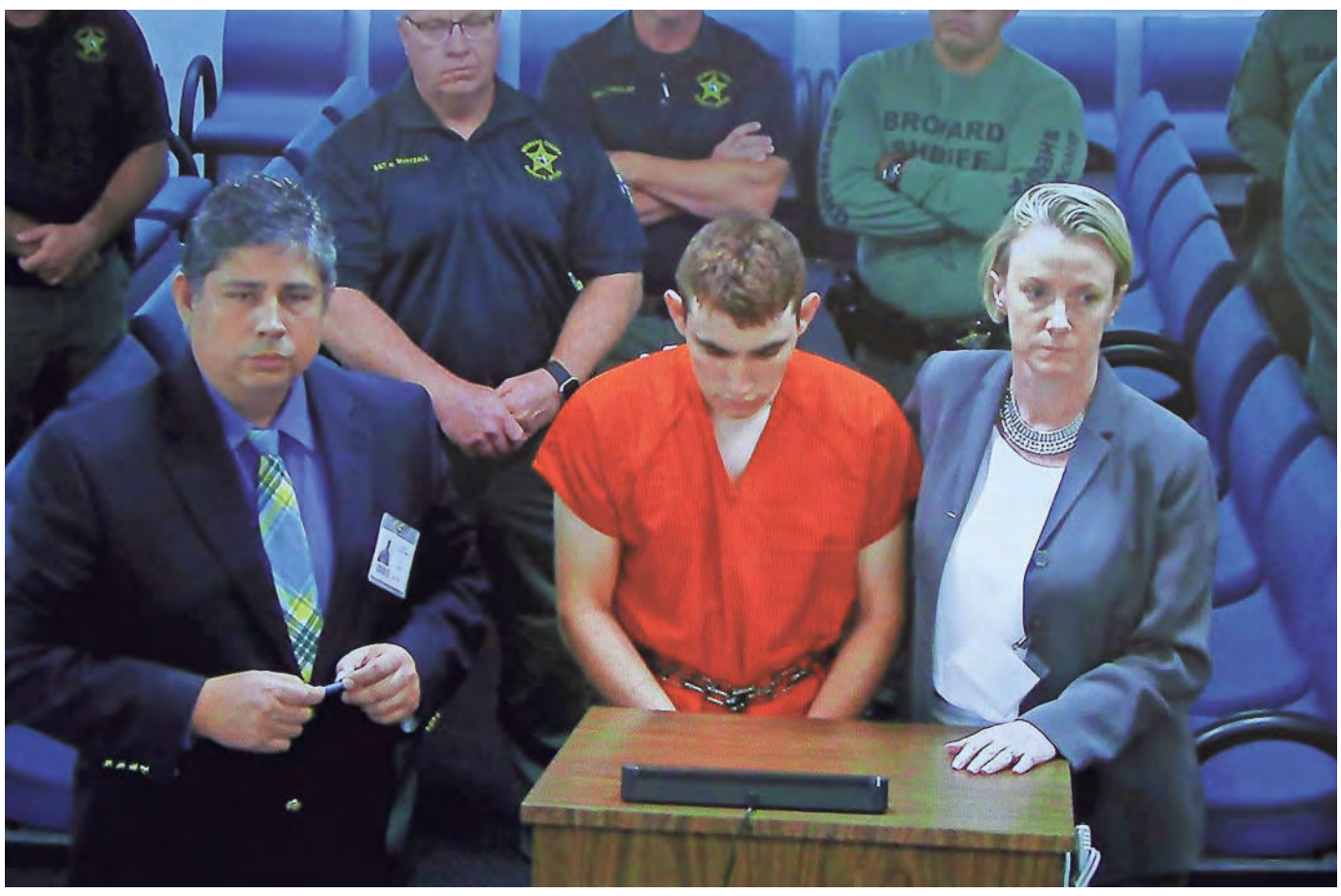
"Is this Fred Bell? ... I got something from our lawyers yesterday. This is the primary lawyer suing us," Snowden said.

MCBOE President Robert Porterfield and members Mary Briers, Arica Watkins-Smith and Eleanor Dawkins voted in favor of the appointment with Snowden, Durden Dean and MCBOE Vice President Lesa Keith voting against it.

Bell, a local attorney and Montgomery city councilman, is currently the attorney for Pamela Wooden, the former Montgomery Public Schools (MPS) chief financial officer who was fired by the board after an August 2016 paycheck issue led to MPS staff and faculty not receiving payment. Wooden sued board members Porterfield, Snowden, Keith, Dean, Briers, Dawkins, former board member Roberta Collins, and former MPS Superintendent Margaret Allen in their official capacities as well as Snowden and Keith

See ATTORNEY, Page 8A

USA TODAY NETWORK



Nikolas Cruz, with attorney Melissa McNeill, makes a court appearance Thursday via video feed.
SUSAN STOCKER/SOUTH FLORIDA SUN-SENTINEL VIA AP

Fla. suspect 'broken'

Man faces 17 counts of murder after deadliest school shooting since Sandy Hook massacre

After his expulsion from high school last year for fighting, Nikolas Cruz allegedly returned to the school in Parkland, Florida, on Wednesday outfitted with a gas mask, smoke grenades and a semi-automatic rifle.

Authorities say he triggered a fire alarm, then opened fire on students pouring into hallways. It was the nation's deadliest school shooting since a gunman attacked the Sandy Hook school in Newtown, Connecticut, more than five years ago.

Cruz made his first court appearance Thursday on charges of premeditated murder in the killing of 17 students and faculty at the school. His attorney, Melissa McNeill, called him a "broken child" who is remorseful about the killings.

> "It wasn't like there wasn't concern for him."
>
> **Broward County Mayor Beam Furr**
> On high school shooting suspect Nikolas Cruz's treatment for mental health problems

See Story on 1B

Michelle Browder, of More Than Tours and the founder of the "I Am More Than" youth organization, is organizing a Purple Carpet event at One Court Square to celebrate the release the new "Black Panther" movie. MICKEY WELSH/ADVERTISER

Woman rolling out purple carpet for 'Black Panther'

Shannon Heupel Montgomery Advertiser
USA TODAY NETWORK

So what's the most awesome thing about Black Panther in Marvel's new movie?

Well he's royalty, for one thing. The character T'Challa is super mega rich and incredibly intelligent. He's got superhuman strength, speed, durability and senses. His kingdom of Wakanda is highly advanced and has a mountain of virtually indestructible metal called vibranium (plus, he's got a super suit made of the stuff).

But what makes him truly special in the mind of Montgomery business woman and social activist Michelle Browder is what lies beneath the Black Panther's mask and armor: the image of a black man (actor Chadwick Boseman) in a positive, inspiring role.

"The movie is what's galvanizing everybody because of not just the anticipation, but the genius behind the thing," Browder said. "I had heard about it (Black Panther in the comic books), but for it to be a full cast of African-Amer-

See 'PANTHER', Page 5A

USA TODAY
Flu vaccine is only 25% effective against strongest strain this year. **1B**

Legislature
House passes Stand Your Ground law for churches. **3A**

Weather
High 76° ▫ Low 57°
Cloudy. Forecast, **10A**

Volume 191 | No. 47
Home delivery pricing inside
Subscribe 877-424-0028
Since 1829 ©2018
Daily $1.50

Introducing Our Best Technology Ever.
GENIUS™ 3.0 technology.
Miracle-Ear®
SPECIAL OFFER
BUY ONE GET ONE 50% OFF ON ME-1, ME-2 HEARING SOLUTION.
CALL TODAY! 334.954.1396
Special offer applies to purchase of ME-1, ME-2 solutions (pair). 50% discount applies only when first aid is purchased at the regular list price (MSRP). Valid at participating Miracle-Ear locations only. Not valid with any other discount or offer. Not valid on previous purchases. Offer Expires 02/28/18.